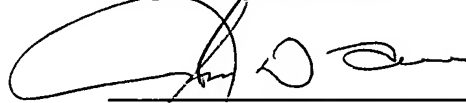


Thus the primary reference, Perry (911), does not disclose a releasable outer coupler for connecting the third and fourth hose casings, said outer coupler including opposing longitudinally shiftable sleeves associated with each said third and fourth hose casings, each said sleeves threadedly shiftable relative to its respective associated hose casing between an extended position and a retracted position; said sleeves being connectable in their said extended positions as stated in claim 1 of the application. In Perry, coupler (11) connects parts (10) and (12).

Specifically with respect to the rejection of Claim 3, there is no fastener securing sleeves (9) and (12) as identified on page 3 of the examiner's office action. Body Portion (10) referred to erroneously as a sleeve on page 4 of the examiner's office action is not longitudinally shiftable relative to its associated casing (1) but rather is simply connected to coupling member (12) by a threaded retainer collar.

Accordingly, claim 1 and claim 3 are not anticipated by Perry (911), or any other patent referred to in this office action.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James D. Hall', is written over a horizontal line.

James D. Hall, Reg. No. 24,893

Botkin & Hall, LLP

105 E. Jefferson Blvd., Suite 400

South Bend, Indiana 46601

Phone: 574-234-3900

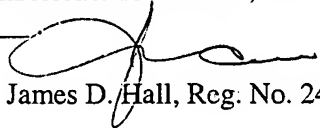
Fax: 574-234-2839

Attorney for the Applicant



CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited in the U. S. Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on 1 Dec. 04


James D. Hall, Reg. No. 24,893